

B-3073 - B-3078

1815-1825/1870's

805-829 S. Charles St. (East side)

Baltimore, Md.

Private and semi-public access

The rows of two and a half story, two bay wide brick houses at 813-819 S. Charles St. and 821-829 S. Charles St. are among the earliest surviving rows of Federal-style houses built in the Federal Hill area. The houses at 813-819 S. Charles St. are the earliest, having been built between 1815 and 1819 by Andrew Rohr, a butcher who lived at 813 S. Charles St. The houses are noteworthy for being only one room deep, a fact that corresponds to their early date. The larger, two-room deep row at 821-829 S. Charles St. was built in 1818-1820 by John Cator, a local brickmaker. 821-825 S. Charles St. are in close to their original exterior condition but 827-829 S. Charles St. now serves as a local bar and the facade has been drastically altered. To the north of Churchill St., at 805-807 and 809-811 S. Charles St., there are two pairs of three story, two bay wide brick buildings with shed roofs and bracketed cornices, the first floor areas of each having at some point in the past been converted to storefronts. These buildings represent either replacements or enlargements of the original two and a half story houses that were built on this site in the early 1820's by Nelson Wells, a free black who worked in the area as a drayman. Except for the bar at 827-829 S. Charles St. all of the houses in this block are currently unoccupied and awaiting renovation.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

B-3073
MAGI 0430732511

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

805-807 S. Charles St.

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

___DISTRICT

☒ BUILDING(S)

___STRUCTURE

___SITE

___OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

___PUBLIC

☒ PRIVATE

___BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

___IN PROCESS

___BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

___OCCUPIED

☒ UNOCCUPIED

___WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

___YES: RESTRICTED

___YES: UNRESTRICTED

☒ NO

PRESENT USE

___AGRICULTURE

___COMMERCIAL

___EDUCATIONAL

___ENTERTAINMENT

___GOVERNMENT

___INDUSTRIAL

___MILITARY

___MUSEUM

___PARK

___PRIVATE RESIDENCE

___RELIGIOUS

___SCIENTIFIC

___TRANSPORTATION

☒ OTHER: restoration contemplated

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Records Office Room 601

Liber #:

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

Baltimore City Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

STATE

Maryland 21202

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

___FEDERAL ___STATE ___COUNTY ___LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

B-3073

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT
☐ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☒ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This pair of three story, two bay brick structures with shed roof and bracket cornice probably replaced an original 2 1/2 story brick house on this site in the late 1860's. The first floors of both structures seem to have always served as store-fronts. Each building has a two story rear kitchen wing.

The buildings are three stories in height, 12 1/2' wide, and extend back on their lots about 50'. They are constructed in running bond. The shed roof is capped by a cornice of Italianate design consisting of a deeply projecting crown molding supported by carved modillions. Scroll-sawed fleur-de-lis decorations appear on panels between the modillions and there is a row of cut-work scallop decorations beneath. Five carved wooden brackets connect the cornice to a lower molding strip carved with an egg and dart design. The brick frieze area thus defined is punctuated by four scroll-sawed ventilating panels. Two rectangular chimneys are located along the partition wall between the two buildings. Each house also has a wide, rear chimney, rising against the east end wall of the kitchen addition. The window openings of the second floor have segmentally arched brick lintels with scroll-sawed tympanum and wood sills; those of the third floor have flat wood lintels and sills. The original 2/2 sash survives in some of the windows; others are boarded up.

The original store-front of 805 S. Charles St. has been modernized in an Art Deco style, with rectangular black glass panels framing a two-sided plate glass shop window flush with the facade, supported on a concrete base. The modern door is recessed. The store-front of 807 S. Charles St. may be original, though it seems Colonial Revival in character. The deep cornice with its heavy crown molding and deep frieze area is supported at either end by two paneled pilasters, and in the center with two engaged columns, all with Doric capitals. The three bay design thus formed originally had two long vertical glass panels to the left and the doorway to the right. The modern glass and panel door is surmounted by a single light transom. The buildings sit on a low basement, the entrances being reached by three wide stone steps. There is an arched alleyway between the two buildings.

The floor plans of 805-807 S. Charles St. are representative of the way in which Victorian style buildings were either designed or adapted for simultaneous commercial and residential use. The first floor of 807 S. Charles St. most recently served as the offices of an insurance company and the 1900-1930 vintage tall front counter, with its bank-like iron grating, still survives. This front business space extends back some 29' in depth. It seems to have always existed as one large space; the first floor of 805 S. Charles St. similarly consists of but a single deep room. The stairs, which rise to the second floor in three short flights, forming a U shape, are located in a rear passage between the main structure and the kitchen addition. There is an outside entrance from the alleyway, leading directly to the stair hall, thus indicating that the builder wished to provide access to the upstairs rooms, separate from the business space below. The upstairs rooms could thus have been occupied either by the family running the business on the first floor, or rented out to tenants. A 14' deep kitchen with a wide fireplace on its end wall, extends to the rear of the house. The second floor has three rooms, each with a fireplace-- a front and back room over the main room below, and a rear room over the kitchen area.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

7 DESCRIPTION

B-3073

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT
☐ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☐ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☐ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

805-807 S. Charles St., cont.

The stairs to the third floor rise from a narrow hallway between the front and back rooms. A partition wall encloses the second floor back room along its southern side, thereby forming a long hallway which connects the stair landing to the front room and the stairs to the third floor. The third floor is divided into a front and back room. These rooms do not have fireplaces. The ceilings of the house are high--those of the first floor are 10' in height, those of the second floor, 9', and those of the third floor 8 3/4' in height.

Although the front doors of 805-807 S. Charles St. have been replaced with modern doors, the doors leading from the alleyways into the stair halls seem to be original. They are wide paneled doors flanked by vertical side lights and surmounted by light transoms. The main floor of both houses has 4' high vertical wainscoting. The doors of the third floor bedrooms have painted, simulated wood graining.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES c. 1867

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This pair of buildings is representative of the second phase of commercial/residential construction in the Federal Hill area, being built after the Civil War in the then popular shed-roof, bracketed cornice Victorian style. This type of building served the same function as its pre-War gable-roofed predecessor, the first floor area serving as a store-front and the upper two floors serving as a residence for the family operating the store below, or to provide rental income for the landlord. The store-front facade of 807 S. Charles St. seems to be original to the building, and if so, is important as one of few surviving Victorian store-fronts in the area.

A particular significance attaching to this property is the fact that the 2 story house that was formerly on the site was owned by Nelson Wells, a free man of color who worked as a drayman.¹ Wells bought this property and the lot adjoining to the south in 1818.² Interestingly, when Wells' widow died her heir, a George Martin, also colored, sued the trustees of Wells' estate, who had gone ahead and sub-leased the two properties in question, for the right to collect the rents. Apparently it was the trustees of the estate who built the two buildings on the lots, for it was they who sub-leased the properties in 1868. Martin was successful in his suit, and therefore one can assume that the owners of the buildings at 805-811 S. Charles St. paid their ground rents to a black man.³

¹Baltimore City Directory, 1822, 1842

²Baltimore City Land Records, Liber WG 148, Folio 454

³Ibid., Liber GR 506, Folio 156

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

M.E. Hayward / Historic Sites Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Maryland Historical Trust / Struever Bros. & Eccles

DATE

3/79

STREET & NUMBER

1745 Circle Rd.

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Ruxton

STATE

Maryland 21204

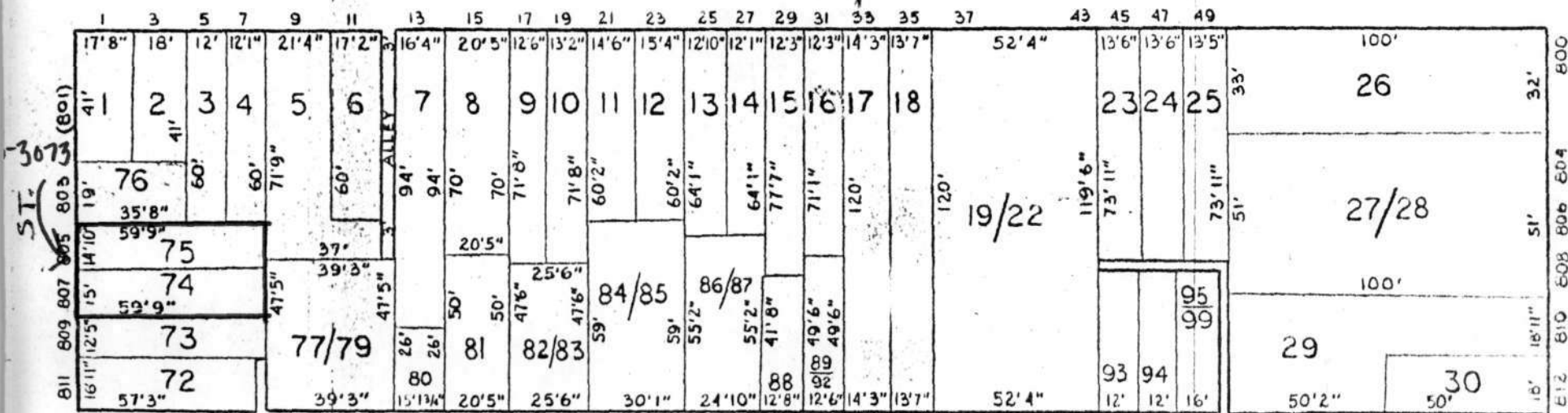
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

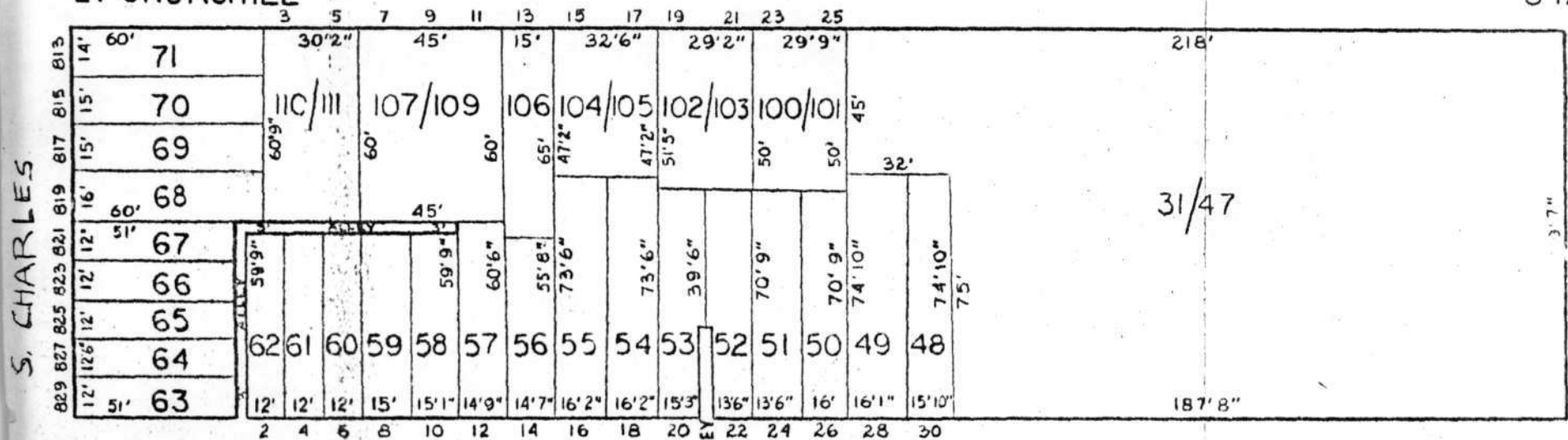
E. MONTGOMERY

ST.



E. CHURCHILL

ST.



E. HENRIETTA

ST.

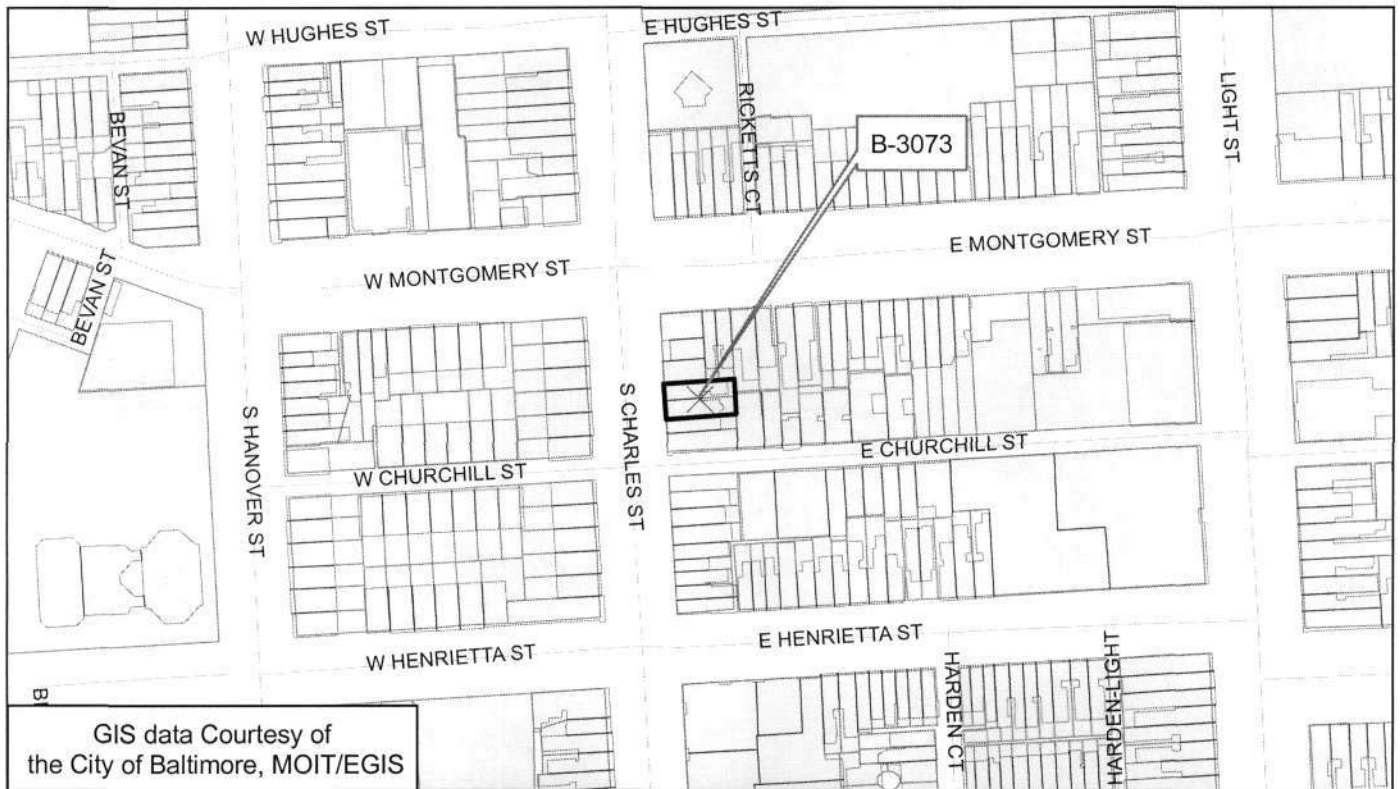
S. CHARLES

LIGHT ST.

ST

LIGHT

B-3073
805-807 S. Charles Street
Block 0905 Lots 075-074
Baltimore City
Baltimore East Quad.





B-3073

805-807 S. Charles St.

M.E.H.

4/79

West elevation